

BRAZOS WATERMASTER ADVISORY COMMITTEE

10/16/2015 Meeting

Texas Sports Hall of Fame

Meeting Minutes

Primary Meeting Topic: TxWAS Watermaster Accounting Software Overview Presentation

BWAC Members:

Morriss Barney, Texas Municipal Power Agency

Scott Blasor, Palo Pinto MWD #1

Brad Brunett, Brazos River Authority

Sherie Burnette, Irrigator

Timothy D. Finley, Dow Chemical Company

Gene Fisseler, NRG Texas Power, LLC

Robert George, Irrigator

Tommy Hodges, Alcoa

David Sauer, Gulf Coast Water Authority

Gary Spicer, Luminant Power

Rodney Stephens, Irrigator

Kevin Taylor, Somervell County Water District

Nicole Torralva, City of Temple

Jenna Walker, City of Waco

Brent Wheeler, Irrigator

BWAC Members absent with prior notice: Jenna Walker, City of Waco; Scott Blasor, Palo Pinto MWD #1

BWAC Members absent without prior notice: None

BWAC Membership Changes Noted: Jonathan Dulus replaces Jenna Walker, City of Waco

TCEQ Staff present:

Amy Settemeyer – TCEQ, Manager, Watermaster Section,

Molly Mohler – TCEQ, Brazos Watermaster,

Kaitlyn Colunga – Deputy Watermaster (Stephenville),

Nancy Ragland – Deputy Watermaster (Waco),

Michaela McCown – Deputy Watermaster (Waco),

Guy Falzarano – Deputy Watermaster (Lake Jackson),

Steven Dyer – Deputy Watermaster (Stephenville), and

Guests present: Jordan Furnans (consultant), Mary Ann McCartt (BRA), Taylor Deitl (BRA), Chris Higgins, Shane Zant (Brazos Electric), Mike Meyers (Brazos Electric), Justin Tergerson (City of Clifton)

Meeting Summary

Call to Order

- The meeting was called to order by Gene Fisseler, BWAC Chair, at 1:33 pm.

Introductions

- All BWAC Members, TCEQ staff, and guests introduced themselves

Review and Approval of Minutes of July 17, 2015

- Minutes of the July 17, 2015, meeting were distributed and briefly discussed
- David Sauer moved to approve the minutes. Brent Wheeler seconded the motion and the minutes were approved

Water Master Staff Update (Molly Mohler)

- To date, staff has contacted 67% of basin water rights holders, which accounts for greater than 90% of all water allocated in the program.
- Low water flows in parts of the basin are resulting in curtailment of diversions for some water rights holders.
- Portions of the state and basin have received very little rain since May. In general, river flows in the basin are dropping. Molly, in response to a question, confirmed that water under contract with BRA (water which can be released from storage) is not impacted by recent curtailments.
- The budget proposed and reviewed at July meeting was approved by TCEQ Commissioners in September.
- Since budget approval, efforts are underway to get program staff fully set up with vehicles and equipment to manage the program.
 - Staff vehicles are on order and expected to be delivered in November at which time borrowed vehicles would be returned.
 - Staff will be allowed to keep loaned computers; reimbursement of these computers will come from BWM funds.
 - Other supplies (for example flow monitoring equipment) are being acquired.
- TCEQ is in the process of generating invoices for water right holders included in the Brazos Program. These invoices are expected to be distributed in late October/early November. Water rights holders will have 30 days to pay.
- The amount invoiced is generated by the Watermaster Program but the invoices and payment processing will be handled by TCEQ Financial Administration.

TxWAS Watermaster Accounting Software Overview Presentation (Michaela McCown)

- TxWAS is the software used by the Watermaster Programs to track diversions and water use of each individual water rights account. It is, more or less, similar to software used to manage bank account balances with special features that accommodate its role in managing water.
- The Watermaster, deputies, and office support staff all have access to TxWAS. Jillian Huff spends a large portion of her time entering Declaration of Intent to Divert Water (DOI) information, printing and distributing Pump Operating Reports (POR), and entering data from returned PORs in this software.
- TxWAS is a relational database where information can be entered and accessed in a variety of ways. The database contains information on all the water rights being managed by the Watermaster program.
- The software is set up to produce standard reports. For example: Ten largest diverters, total volume of diversions, and outstanding DOIs.
- TxWAS allows for individual water rights holders to have multiple accounts, as needed, to specifically account for various water rights, specified permitted use volumes, priority dates and/or diversion clients. The TxWAS account number is the water right number with a coded extension to represent other unique attributes for a particular reporting account.
- Water use that gets assigned to each account must be metered. A request to divert is reported to the Watermaster as a DOI and the actual volume diverted is reported to the Watermaster via a POR.
- TxWAS has a data table for tracking information on meters that captures all import meter information. This includes information like serial number, units for metered flow reading, installation information, associated water right(s), and the meter roll-over value.
- DOI information is entered into TxWAS to capture expected diversion information and the program is then used to produce a POR for a specific diversion event.
- The PORs generated by TxWAS are sent to water rights holder and must be completed and returned.
- Information on an individual POR is used to reconcile actual water pumped based on the reported meter readings with the communicated DOI. The POR supplies the information necessary to assign an actual diverted water quantity to a particular water right account.
- BRA customers submit water usage requests to BRA who then emails the requests to the Watermaster office for entering into TxWAS. Subsequently, water use reported by BRA customers is sent to BRA who then emails use reports to the Watermaster office for entering into TxWAS.

- Water rights are assigned to a location on the river. This is done based on coordinates of the diversion points. When appropriate, the assigned locations may be stream segments.
- Meters are assigned in the TxWAS program to specific diversion locations. It should be noted that some meters (in particular, meters for agricultural users) can be associated with mobile pumping operations and thus could be assigned to more than one water right and/or diversion location.
- TxWAS uses pumping capacity and expected run time to do an approximate check of the reported metered diversion. As such, it is important for the user to report to the Watermaster when pumps are started and stopped.
- The TCEQ and Watermaster Program are working to develop a basin-wide operating model. This model will eventually be used to track and better understand the basin-wide water balance.

Bylaws Amendment Discussion

- Gene Fisseler shared a document outlining proposed changes to the BWAC bylaws
- The proposed changes were drafted based on input received during previous meetings. The intent of the proposed changes are to direct the BWAC leadership nominating committee, to the extent possible, to consider fair and equitable representation of members' diverse water uses and geographical interests, when nominating new leadership.
- Gene indicated that a vote to modify bylaws was not possible during the meeting because such a vote, per the bylaws, requires 10 days prior notice of the proposed changes.
- Discussion was generally supportive of the proposed changes.
- As a path to bring resolution to this matter, it was proposed that the group could be provided email notice of the proposed bylaws change with an electronic (e-mail) and that voting could happen via E-mail no sooner than 10 days later.
- David Sauer moved that "Notice of the proposed bylaws changes should be officially communicated through E-mail to members with an electronic vote to be taken no sooner than 10 days following the notice." Morriss Barney seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Thoughts on Future Meetings

- The following topics were offered up through discussion as future topics for meeting with the intent of increasing the general knowledge of BWAC members
 - TCEQ's WAM Modelling and Water Rights Reliability Prediction
 - BRA's Water Accounting Process
 - TCEQ Brazos River Water Operations Model (once developed)
 - Basin-Wide Water Use (post full year data collection)
- Timing for a next meeting was discussed; no final decision was drawn; however, scheduling a meeting at least once in the spring before the annual budget meeting in July was discussed.

New Business

Leader Nominating Committee

- The group briefly discussed the need to appoint a nominating committee in preparation for officer elections at the spring 2016 meeting or at July 2016 budget meeting.

Unpermitted Impoundments

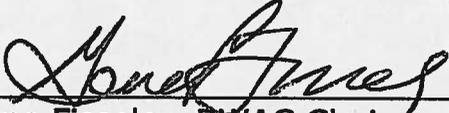
- Amy Settemeyer requested BWAC input on how to handle unpermitted impoundments in the basin when they are identified. Often these result from an exempted, domestic and livestock, impoundments being transferred through a land sale into non-exempted service.
 - Many of these are less than 200 acre-feet
 - Other Watermaster Programs eventually drive these matters to enforcement
 - Owners can remove or attempt to obtain a permit
- TCEQ recommendation is to use a “find it / fix it” approach rather than moving directly to enforcement to give owners a chance to take action regarding the illegal impoundment. If the owner fails to act, then eventually enforcement would result.
- ~~BWAC discussed the topic and supported giving owners an opportunity to “fix-it” with a~~
limit on the time allowed to fix it before moving to enforcement.

Adjournment

There being no further business before the BWAC, it was moved to adjourn. The motion was seconded and the meeting was adjourned at 3:32 pm.

Tim Finley
BWAC Secretary

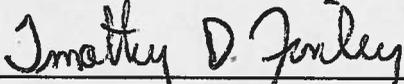
*Adopted and Approved in Session of the Brazos Watermaster Advisory
Committee on the 30th day of March, 2016.*



Gene Fisseler, BWAC Chair



Brent Wheeler, BWAC Vice-Chair



Tim Finley, BWAC Secretary